Mistress

By

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Tall. Ginger. Nice suit. Short hair. Thin.

These were the observations I made almost subconsciously as I bumped into her and her scolding hot mocca-chocca-latino splashed me full in the chest.

I screamed as it burned and drenched my t-shirt.

She quickly pulled the headphones from my ears and stripped my tshirt from my body so fast I didn't notice, not until her cold hands applied soothing cream to my chest.

“Um Hi” I said, suddenly aware that I was shirtless before a woman who fit my limited criteria of 'Would Bang'.

“Dreadfully sorry, I'm not usually so clumsy” she said as she applied the ointment. It felt like she was speaking to me in the same tone as one might console a kitten they'd accidentally kicked when it had chosen to lie camouflaged on the stairs.

“Er, not to worry, my fault. I was the one with the headphones.” I said.

She pulled a roll of bandage from her jacket pocket and proceeded to wrap my chest in bandage,. Presumably to keep the cream from messing up my shirt.

“My name's Sam...” I said, to relieve the awkwardness.

“I am Lady Jemima Cressida Manzor” she said. “I travel mostly, contract work. What do you do?”

“Ah” I said “I am unemployed. Graduated university with a BA in media studies. Little hard to get a job.”

She finished wrapping my torso in bandages then pulled a fresh tshirt out of her jacket pocket for me to wear then gave me a carrier bag for my sodden tshirt.

Once I pulled on the new shirt she handed me her card and said “If you ever need me, this is how you contact me.”

And then she left.

I went on my way and almost forgot it happened.

But then fate has a sense of humour when it wants to.

Three days later I was in Woking because I was at a friend's and he'd run out of eggs and asked me to nip into town. I was too drunk to say no.

I got the eggs all right but as I headed through the car park beside the Light Box I gained this weird tinitus, kept hearing a stammering “Sh!” it was weird, like pencil on paper or nails down a blackboard. Around about this point the wind started to pick up and then I must have blacked out for a moment as there was a short blonde woman in trainers and a tanktop screaming at me to run.

So I did.

Only because I was carrying eggs I was careful and slow enough to hear Lady Jemima Cressida Manzor cry out in distress. I think it was probably a swear word but I wasn't paying attention to the content of the cry, only the context. Let's pause things here for a moment though.

There's a saying in philosophy and TV Tropes: What You Are In The Dark.

In layman's terms it means what and who you are when the chips are down and nobody is looking. When you are all alone with a stark and terrible choice between self preservation and risking death, embarrassment, shame or pain for the chance to save others. Of course some when faced with such a situation some can't bare the pressure and go mad.

I didn't hesitate. I turned around so fast I dropped the eggs and wasn't around to hear them smash.

I saw 5 thugs dressed like idiots in silver and waving around stupid toy guns and in the center, the good lady.

I think I tried to roar but I was so out of breath it was probably a whimper. I flattened two of them and tripped a third, the good Lady used this moment to take care of the other two and when it was over I got up and strode over to her. “Are you alright?”

“Thanks to you” she said.

I laughed. “Samuel Witton, the big hero. Well it was nice knowing you but I better dash, I have a party to get back to.”

And then pain.

Pain so completely overpowering that to save me from the memory of it the good lady had to remove most of my memory of what happened next but I remember her face when I screamed, I

remember the fury as she ran past me and a fraction of a second of his screams.

Then I woke up, naked save for a pair of ocean blue boxer sorts, on a hospital bed in a futuristic looking room, all clean lines and indusriality with just a touch of cool tech and kitsche homeliness. - I, er, watched a lot of Grand Designs as a kid. - And there was the good lady, looking over me.

She held up two pills, a red pill and a blue pill.

I laughed “Morpheus, you look different.”

She laughed too. “Yeah Logicios aren't exactly the most original of thinkers.”

“So blue pill and I wake up tomorrow and none of this happened, right?” I asked.

“Close.” she said. “You take the blue pill and you turn up at that party you were supposed to go to with no memory of this event. I'll just be the woman who spilled coffee on you. If you take the red pill you still go to the party and you still have the option to never see me again but you remember this, more or less.”

“Does anybody ever take the blue pill?” I asked.

She laughed. “Come on, this is serious.”

“Fine” I said. “I, Samuel Gordon Witton, being of sound mind and will do hereby outline my desire and choice to take the red pill and remember the proudest moment of my life.”

“Thank you” she said and handed me the red pill.

I woke up on the doorstep of my friends, eggs in hand. I blinked as I remembered then knocked on the door. “I got your eggs”

“Hey man, come in. I gotta introduce you Cindi, she's from Singapore.”

That was a fun night.

The next day passed uneventfully.

On the third day after I took the red pill I looked at the card she gave me, it's a twenty seven digit number. Ridiculous. It won't work. It can't work. But as I passed by that car park on the way home I dialled it just to prove once and for all that I would never ever see her again.

“Hello, Sammy”

“How did you make that work?” I asked, not turning round.

“The card is a tracking device. It's what I locked on to yesterday when I needed to make an emergency landing after my job went wrong. There's a sensor that can tell if you've entered the twenty seven digits. It received the signal and sent off the coordinates to me. I chose to arrive early and wait for my moment because I like sending shivers down your spine.”

“You're an alien?” I asked.

“No...” she said. “I'm more of an advanced human from a different universe.”

“And your ship?” I said. “A great grinding sound as a gale blows and a woman appears...”

“Yes.” she said. “Very observant. We can get into the specifics of it later. What do you want?”

“What do you want?” I said, turning to face her. “I'm no fool. I'm an ant to you. I am a fat overweight shortsighted virgin with autism, piles and an inability to smell. What could you possibly want with me? And don't tell me you don't want anything from me, you wouldn't have let me remember if you didn't want me for some reason.”

“Okay” she said. “I'll tell you but please don't assume you have to say yes. You are in control here, you can put the breaks on whenever you'd like.”

“I'll bare that in mind, continue.”

“Right.” she said. “Well when I bumped into you - Genuinely by chance - I felt your chest and a primitive part of me wanted you right there and then but I resisted. There are so many beautiful men, it isn't right to fall for everyone that crosses your path. And then I made that emergency landing and you saved my life. I checked the footage as you recovered in the infirmary, you ran right when my ship told you to, but returned as soon as I cried out. That's you, Sam, obedient enough to run like fuck when told and loyal and brave enough to risk your life for someone you met once. I can't help but like that.”

I stared at her. “You fancy me?”

She stared at her shoes. “I feel a deep attraction towards you but it isn't of the romantic kind.”

“Then what is it?”

She blushed and handed me a brown envelope. “I prepared this in case you asked a question to that affect but I never dared – Look just open it when you get home please and don't hate me.”

I took the envelope. “Well I guess you don't hate me then and aren't trying to kill me, just don't disappear alright. I want to know I can find you.”

“I'll have sensors rigged up in this car park.” she said. “Say my name if you want me.”

I nodded and went on my way. “Good day, Lady Jemima”

I didn't bother opening the envelope for the next day or so, had to let the heat of that revelation chill for a bit before I committed to it.

Then I opened the package and the first thing I saw was a leaflet titled.

“So you've been asked if you want to be a pet?”

It was an advice guide outlining that it usually meant being a ‘Sylph’ and getting a load of abilities including practical immortality and was in many ways a not too shabby lifestyle choice providing you had the right owner. It also offered a handy passage on how to deal with the revelation of who your prospective owner might be. Apparently romantic partners attempting to own each other was common enough but frowned upon as such relationships were typically abusive. It also provided numbers for inter dimensional helplines in case you did end up in an abusive relationship. There was even a detailed breakdown of the rights of a sylph and the rights of an owner.

Next I saw a dvd called “From Gladrags to Leashes.” It was a 3 hour documentary following 5 pairs of individuals as they made the journey to being owner and pet. It was interesting, informative uplifting and also a little disturbing. There was definitely an alien morality going on here.

Finally there was a tardis blue envelope with the word “Sammy” written on it in pen. I present it unaltered:

Sammy,
If you are reading this then chances are I am crying somewhere as I weep over you. I feel a deep connection with you, a yearning to keep you safe. I really don't want to walk away but I am not like the other Logicios. Heck I left the Logicios behind a year ago. I am an independent mercenary travelling the multiverse and it gets lonely. I would invite you along without giving you the sylph pill but you'd wither and die like all the other humans. You must understand I travel through time, space and logic. My species is spectacularly long lived but it has to be. There are nebulae that would age you to death in a second.

But outside of selfish practicality why do I want you to be a sylph? My sylph? Because you are cute and funny and you saved my life and I know you'd do it again. I looked you up, Sammy, I know who you are and I like you. I really like you. You're like if a charming stray cat appeared out of nowhere and saved your life. You'd want to take it home with you so you could feed it richly and give it a fantastic home, wouldn't you? And I can help you. I can fix you. The sylph pill can give you the body you want, whatever that is. You could smell again, say goodbye to piles and counting your calories. Hell even if the sylph pill doesn't help you get laid I will make it my personal mission to make sure you have a romantic partner of whatever gender or consenting species you want and if one day your partner asks that you take the cure I will stand by you as your friend.

I don't blame you if you hate me and never want to see me again. I'm sorry to be so creepy but it's a different morality out here in the multiverse

Yours sincerely,
Lady Jemima Cressida Manzor.

And then there was a bunch of kisses, clearly blotched from where tears had fallen on the paper. That did it.

I knew now that I needed to be with her. She needed me and she could make my life so much better and I was so alone...

So I put on my jacket and my trainers and I walked towards the car park knowing that it didn't matter what time I got there or what condition I was in when I did I just had to get there. She needed me.

So I walked as Kasabian played in my ears.

Funny thing about walking when you're a fat hormonally screwed up mess of a man, it's hard. Really really hard. I was hiccuping within the first 5 minutes, swallowing back rivers of snot in the next, my feet in agony, my legs chafing from the abrasion of walking and my arse decided that now would be the perfect time for a bunch of difficult slightly painful farts and my face was getting real cold, particularly my forehead. I was muttering “Don't trip. For god's sake, don't trip.” And then it started to rain. And because I was a fat guy in a suit in terrible weather walking by a road motorists would toot me and I would get splashed by water.

I arrived looking like a downed rat, took several deep breaths then cried. “Lady Jemima Cressida Manzor! You alluded to a cure!?”

“Yes!” The Lady cried. “There is a cure. I took it myself before I became a Logicio”

“Then I, Samuel Gordon Witton, being of sound mind and body to hereby consent to being your lawfully owned sylph. Tame me.”

I felt her envelop me with her warmth and then I was in the dry, being stripped in a heated room. It was the Lady.

“Thank you.” She said and led me to a shower.

The water let me forget for a moment the choice that I had made as I was consumed by warmth and the dance of cleansing, baptising myself so I might be reborn as a sylph.

I stepped out of the shower and found the Lady looking at me. I twirled for her. It was only right.

She was about to commit majorly to me so I showed her the goods. She handed me a warm clean towel and then a dressing gown.

“This -” she said upon leading me down the winding corridors to a specific door. “- is your room.”

I pushed the door open and found that in the centre of the huge room was a hamster cage large enough for a Sylph, the was also a king sized bed, my home computer in the set up I had dreamed of and a lounging area.

“I can have it autocleaned if you like.” she said. “The wardrobes are filled with your clothes from home there's a map of the ship on the desk but if you ever need anything just say 'Ship' then ask your question.”

I nodded. “Thank you. I'll find you when I'm ready.”

She smiled and watched me enter the room and close the door.

I was just going to put on my clothes and go but then I decided to check on what the TV was like and what the internet was like. Never do that if you are in my shoes, it's just rude.

So I turned up in her room and said. “Sorry, I got distracted but I'm ready.”

She nodded and handed me a helmet “Put this on and think about what you want your new body to be like.”

I did as I was told and blinked, I wasn't wearing the helmet any more and I was standing in a bucket of water, completely naked.

The Lady said. “Sorry but what you want from the Sylph pill necessitates a completely fresh start. The process can be quite painful and time intensive but I can make it easy for you. You will wake up in a moment, your body just the way you like it and with only vaguest memories of the intervening period. I can explain later, if you're curious. Here's the pill, if you're ready?”

I swallowed the proffered pill, it looked like a mint imperial, and washed it down with a glass of water.

Another blink and I was lying on a couch wearing tight shorts. I felt amazing, strong. I looked down at myself and saw the rippling muscles and gasped.

She laughed. “A present and a request.”

I took the present, a red collar with the word “Sammy” on it.

“And the request?”

“Call me Mistress” and then she stroked me and I realised just why being a Sylph was so amazing.